



YOUR Health



Los Angeles County Department of Health Services • Public Health

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Stay Safe during Landslides, Mudflows, and Floods

Rainy days can do much more than make your socks wet. Long periods of heavy rain, especially after a dry summer or a busy fire season, can create perfect conditions for landslides, mudslides and floods. You can keep your family safe by learning about rainy weather dangers and taking the following steps to reduce your risks.

Before the Storm: Prepare and Be Aware.

- Create a family disaster plan. Each family member should know the name, address, and phone number of an out-of-state contact. Teach children how and when to call 911, police, and fire departments.
- Put together disaster kits for your home and car. Kit should include:
 - First-aid kit and necessary medications
 - Canned food and a can opener
 - At least three gallons of water per person
 - Protective clothing and shoes
 - Bedding or sleeping bags
 - A battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries

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Healthy Holiday Travels

Every year during the holiday season, millions of people visit friends and family across the world. However, traveling can be dangerous if you do not make good health and safety a priority. No matter what your travel plans are this winter, you should do your best to prepare for any medical emergency and to practice healthy habits every day.

Before your trip

- Pack a medical kit. Include bandages, antibiotic ointment for cuts and scrapes, hydrocortisone cream, alcohol-based hand rubs to wash your hands when soap and water are not available, sunscreen, and over-the-counter medicines to treat headaches and prevent diarrhea and nausea.
- Be sure to have enough prescription medicine with you. This means that you should have an extra few days' worth of medication in case your return flight is delayed.



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- Look out for landslide, mudflow, or flooding threats.
 - Keep track of where rain water drains near your home. Note any signs of land movement or trees that are beginning to lean over. If your home is at risk for landslides, call your local planning department for advice on how to protect your home.
 - If your house floods regularly, keep a stock of tools, plywood, plastic sheeting, lumber, and sand bags.

During a Major Storm: Save Yourself, Not Your Stuff.

- If at home:
 - Tune into a radio or television for warnings of heavy rainfall and follow any directions given by local authorities.
 - Listen for signs of moving trees, boulders, or water.
 - Move to a second story or consider evacuating if it is safe to do.
- If you sense immediate danger:
 - Call your local fire, police, or public works department.
 - Tell your neighbors and help those who may need assistance.
 - Evacuate quickly.
- If you are outdoors:
 - Avoid areas with flooding or rushing water. Never let children near storm drains.
 - Stay away from power lines and electrical wires that have fallen on the ground. Electricity moves easily through water and can kill you.
 - Look out for animals, especially snakes.
 - Do not walk through water that is above your ankles.
 - Do not attempt to cross a flooded street if you are driving.
 - Do not try to swim to safety if you are stranded and surrounded by water. Wait for rescuers to come to you.
 - If you are caught in a landslide or mudflow, curl into a tight ball and protect your head.

After the Storm: Continue to be Cautious

- Listen to local radio or television stations for the latest emergency information.
- Look for and report broken utility lines so they can get turned off quickly.
- Check your building's foundation, chimney and surrounding land for damage. Do not go into a building if it appears unsafe.
- If the power is out, use flashlights and battery lanterns. Don't use matches, cigarette lighters, or other open flames, since gas may be trapped inside. Keep the power off until an electrician has inspected your home.
- If you see sparks, broken wires or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity.
- If you smell gas or hear blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas at the outside main valve and call the gas company from a neighbor's home.
- If your home has been flooded, clean up your house right away. Throw out foods and medicines that may have touched flood water since flood waters are very toxic.
- Until local authorities say that your water supply is safe, boil water for five minutes before drinking or cooking with it.



For more tips, visit the Injury and Violence Prevention Program's website at: <http://lapublichealth.org/ivpp/index.htm>

Rainy Day Dangers

Landslides

During a landslide, rocks, earth and debris fall down slopes that have been weakened by earthquakes, fires, land construction or too much rain. Some landslides move slowly and cause damage over time. Others move quickly, destroying property and taking lives without warning.

Mudflows

Mudflows (or debris flows) occur when rocks, earth and debris drift along moving water. After a heavy downpour, water rapidly collects on the ground and turns the earth into a river of mud called "slurry." Slurry can move quickly, growing in size as it picks up trees, boulders, cars, and other materials.

Floods & Flash Floods

Floods can move boulders, tear out trees, damage buildings, and destroy bridges. The force of just six inches of moving water can knock people down. Flash floods arrive with little warning and can peak within minutes. They result from large amounts of rain that fall within a short amount of time and can create water levels of 10 to 20 feet.

Winter's Bounty of Fruits and Vegetables

This winter, add color to your meals by eating a variety of fruits and vegetables every day. In addition to providing nutrients that keep your body healthy, fruits and vegetables have no cholesterol and most are naturally low in fat and calories. Eating fruits and vegetables as part of a balanced diet can reduce your risk of heart disease, stroke, type-2 diabetes, obesity, and cancer.

Plan to add 3 cups of dark green vegetables and 2 cups of orange vegetables each week to meet new federal nutrition guidelines.

The following list gives you a taste of what is offered this winter and helps you pick the ripest ones from the bunch. Visit your favorite grocery store or your local farmers' market today!

Winter Fruits

- Bananas: Ripe bananas should be bright yellow with few brown specks.
- Cranberries: Cranberries should be hard, brown or deep red in color, and have shiny, smooth skins. Fresh berries bounce when dropped.
- Grapes: Grapes should be firm and plump.
- Grapefruits: Grapefruits should be heavy for their size, firm and thin-skinned.
- Kiwis: Pick kiwis that yield to slight pressure but don't have soft spots.
- Kumquats: Choose thin-skinned, orange fruit about 1.5 inches long. Fruits with green leaves still attached are the freshest.
- Oranges: For juicing, choose firm, thin-skinned oranges. For eating, choose ones with thick skins.
- Passion Fruit: Choose the largest, heaviest passion fruits. If ripe, the skin will be wrinkled but firm with a purple brown color.
- Pears: Pears should yield to very slight pressure.



- Persimmons: Select ones with deep red-orange skin and no yellow areas.
- Pomegranates: Select ones that feel heavy for their size and are very plump. The top should be slightly soft when pressed and the skin should be shiny.
- Pomelo: Choose pomelos that are firm, thin-skinned and feel heavy for their size.
- Tangelo: Look for deep orange-red skin with a prominent neck. They should feel heavy for their size, free of bruises and brown spots.

Winter Vegetables

- Artichokes: Should be heavy and have tightly closed buds and soft green or purple leaves.
- Avocados: Should be uniform in color without blemishes or bruises. Select ones that yield to gentle pressure.
- Bok Choy: Look for dark green, glossy leaves and bright white stalks. Avoid heads with brown spots on the leaves.
- Broccoli: Select firm stems with heads that are dark green. Buds should be closed with no signs of yellow flowers.
- Brussel Sprouts: They should have tight leaves with no browning or yellowing. Sprouts that are still on the stalk are the freshest.
- Cabbage: Find tight, firm, heavy heads with no broken or bruised leaves.
- Cauliflower: Cauliflower heads should be firm with tight white or cream-colored florets, green leaves and no brown spots.
- Chestnuts: They should have glossy brown shells.
- Kale: Pick crisp, bright and tender leaves.
- Lettuce: Leaves should be green, crisp and free of brown spots.
- Parsnips: Look for well-shaped, small, and firm roots.
- Radishes: They may be round or elongated but should have smooth, firm skins. The tops should be green with no signs of wilting or discoloration.
- Rhubarb: Select stems that are long, thin, and fully colored red.
- Snow peas: Select firm, bright green peas.
- Squash: Pick squash that feel heavy for its size. Skins should be thick and hard without blemishes.
- Turnips-White: Choose ones with smooth white and purple skin. They should be about 2-3 inches in diameter and feel heavy for its size.
- Watercress: look for crisp stems with glossy, dime-sized, dark green leaves.

Did you eat enough fruits and vegetables today?

The amount of fruits and vegetables you need to eat each day depends on your age, gender, and level of physical activity. The following chart lists the recommended daily allowances of fruits and vegetables for those who get less than 30 minutes of exercise a day. Check out the U. S. Department of Agriculture's dietary guidelines at www.mypyramid.gov for more information.

Group	Ages	Vegetables (per day)	Fruits (per day)
Children	2-3 years	1 cup	1 cup
	4-8 years	1 ½ cups	1 cup
	9-13 years	2 cups	1 ½ cups
	14-18 years	2 ½ cups	1 ½ cups
Boys	4-8 years	1 ½ cups	1 ½ cups
	9-13 years	2 ½ cups	1 ½ cups
	14-18 years	3 cups	2 cups
	19-30 years	2 ½ cups	1 ½ cups
Women	31-50 years	2 ½ cups	1 ½ cups
	51+ years	2 cups	1 ½ cups
Men	19-30 years	3 cups	2 cups
	31-50 years	3 cups	2 cups
	51+ years	2 ½ cups	2 cups

Healthy Holiday...from page I

- Keep all medicines with you in your carry-on bag in case your other luggage gets lost.
- Check to see if you have good overseas medical insurance because it is not provided with every policy. Your medical insurance should also have good evacuation coverage in case you need to be brought back to the U.S. for emergency care.
- Make sure you have all the necessary up-to-date required vaccinations by checking with your doctor or the CDC website at: www.cdc.gov/travel



Long-distance traveling

Two common health concerns for long-distance travelers are leg pain and dehydration.

Leg pain and swelling can be a sign of blood clots forming the veins of the legs, a condition called deep vein thrombosis. Blood clots in the leg are related to long periods of not moving and can be very dangerous. These clots have the potential to travel to the lungs where they can cause severe breathing difficulties and even death.

Dehydration occurs when people lose too much water from their bodies. This is especially common when traveling in planes. Signs of dehydration are thirst, increased heart rate, fewer trips to the bathroom, and dry lips, mouth and skin.

To prevent these conditions, it is very important to move around every 1 to 2 hours and to drink plenty of water. If you are in a car, remember to stop, get out, and walk around every 100 miles. During long plane rides, get up from your seat and walk up and down the aisle. If the "fasten seat-belt sign" is turned on, try stretching your legs and rotating your ankles while sitting in your seat. The air on airplanes can also be very dry. Lubricating eye drops can help keep eyes moist. Avoid drinking alcohol or having too much coffee. If you have sinus trouble or a bad cold, take a decongestant and use a long acting nasal spray before the plane takes off and before it lands.

Once you arrive

- Carry a copy of your medical history, a list of medications you are on, and a local contact number at all times.
- Remember to wash your hands carefully and frequently.
- Make sure that it is safe to swim in the sea or lakes. Some coastal beaches may have dangerous rip tides and no lifeguards. Some fresh water lakes may contain dangerous parasites.
- When traveling in vehicles, choose sturdy cars with good, experienced drivers.
- Drink bottled water and make sure the safety seal is not broken.

If you are traveling to a third world country:

- Make sure you know where the nearest fully-equipped medical facility can be found. For example, if you are traveling in an area where rabies is common, know where to get a rabies shot. In countries with venomous snakes, know where anti-venom may be found.
- Have your doctor prescribe antibiotics for infectious diarrhea.
- Never walk barefoot. Always wear solid shoes and thick socks.
- Don't eat or drink anything that hasn't been boiled, peeled, or cooked thoroughly.
- Don't get bitten by mosquitoes. Even if you are taking malaria pills, mosquitoes can carry many other diseases. Cover arms and legs with light clothing, sleep with a mosquito net over your bed, and wear insect repellent at all times. In certain parts of the world, DEET is the recommended insect repellent.

To Prevent **Leg Pain and dehydration** while traveling, move around every 1 to 2 hours and drink plenty of water.



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